

Claims

We claim:

1. A protein comprising a membrane-spanning domain and an extracellular domain, wherein the extracellular domain comprises biotin-binding activity.
2. The protein according to claim 1, which further comprises a cytoplasmic domain.
3. The protein according to claim 1, wherein the extracellular domain comprises avidin or streptavidin functional activity.
4. The protein according to claim 1, which comprises an amino acid sequence from a scavenger receptor class A.
5. The protein according to claim 1, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence as defined in SEQ ID NO. 2.
6. The protein according to claim 4, wherein the extracellular domain comprises avidin having a biotin-binding domain.
7. The protein according to claim 2, wherein the extracellular domain comprises avidin or streptavidin functional activity.
8. The protein according to claim 2, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence as defined in SEQ ID NO. 2.
9. The protein according to claim 3, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence as defined in SEQ ID NO. 2.

10. The protein according to claim 7, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence as defined in SEQ ID NO. 2.

11. The protein according to claim 1, for use in therapy.

12. A nucleic acid molecule encoding a protein according to claim 1.

13. The nucleic acid molecule according to claim 12, for use in therapy.

14. A recombinant expression vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule according to claim 12.

15. A process for the production of a protein according to claim 1, comprising transfecting a cell line with a recombinant expression vector according to claim 14, and expressing the protein in the transfected cells.

16. A method for the *in vitro* delivery of a molecule to a target site, comprising the addition of the molecule to a solution containing the target, wherein the molecule is biotinylated and the target comprises a protein according to claim 1.

17. A method for treating a disease in a patient, said method comprising administering to said patient a biotinylated molecule useful in the treatment of said disease, wherein said biotinylated molecule is targeted to a target site comprising a protein according to claim 1 and exerts its effect at said target site.